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ABSTRACT

Framed by the heuristic device of "long waves" of capitalist development, journalism ideology is historically anchored to competitive media economics. (Long waves are 50-year economic cycles comprised of alternating 25-year periods of economic expansion followed by contraction periods.) With each long wave, a new institutional ecology emerges. Competition-generated economic and ideological crises merge in contraction phases; crises are then resolved through reconstruction in expansion phases. Two major shifts in the economic infrastructure of journalism--partisan to commercial, competition to monopoly--provided the impetus for a corollary shift in ideology. Journalism responded to economic crises by harnessing morality to marketing mechanisms. Commercial strategies to restabilize economic crises were ratified in the ideological language of public morality. The American tendency to translate economic crises into moral terms, commercial strategies into professional ideologies, mystifies the linkage of culture to economics. Economic crisis sets the agenda for ideological reconstruction. In the mid-1980s, American journalism is moving through a transition state to a new economic and cultural ecology. If the historic pattern holds, a resolution to the crisis will not emerge for another decade or so. (Author/DF)

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QUALITATIVE STUDIES

LONG WAVES AND JOURNALISM IDEOLOGY IN AMERICA, 1835-1985

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Winner, James E. Murphy Award

Presented to the Qualitative Studies Division,
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Within a materialist perspective, this paper historically anchors journalism ideology to competitive media economics. The heuristic device of "long waves" of capitalist development frames the analysis. "Long waves" are 50-year economic cycles comprised of alternating 25-year periods of economic expansion followed by contraction periods. With each "long wave," a new institutional ecology emerges, requiring structural economic and ideological adaptations and generating economic and ideological contradictions. Competition-generated economic and ideological crises emerge in contraction phases; crises are "resolved" through reconstruction in expansion phases.

Three types of competitive crises are discussed: neo-media, intra-medium, and inter-media. Two major shifts in the economic infrastructure of journalism--partisan to commercial, competition to monopoly--provided the impetus for a corollary shift in ideology. Journalism responded to economic crises by harnessing morality to marketing mechanisms. Commercial strategies to restabilize economic crises were ratified in the ideological language of public morality.

The American tendency to translate economic crises into moral terms, commercial strategies into professional ideologies, mystifies the linkage of culture to economics. Economic crisis sets the agenda for ideological reconstruction. In the mid-1980s, American journalism is moving through a transistion stage to a new economic and cultural ecology. If the historic pattern of long waves holds, a resolution to the contemporary crisis will not emerge for another decade or so, and then economic reconstruction will once again express itself in a revitalized professional ideology and public morality.

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LONG WAVES AND JOURNALISM IDEOLOGY IN AMERICA, 1835-1985

> Until naive world-views and narrow conceptions of the mass media's social functions and economic imperatives are faced up to and redefined, there can be little hope of improvement.
>
> --James E. Murphy and Sharon M. Murphy (1984)

After an eclipse of half a century, journalism ethics in the post-1970 era has reappeared on the agendas of mass communication scholars and media professionals. The accelerated production of articles, books, conferences and courses on journalism ethics in the last decade testifies to the formation of a mini-industry within the academic media establishment. The professional media cadre's renewed interest in ethics is no less remarkable for its intensity and momentum.

REVITALIZATION IN AN ERA OF TRANSITION

The resurgence of critical discourse over media morality signals the emergence of a social movement (Andrews, 1980, 1983; Cathcart, 1980; Griffin, 1952; Wilkinson, 1976; Zald and Berger, 1981), ritualistically attempting to modify, to revitalize and otherwise transform journalism's crisis-ridden professional culture.

According to Wallace (1956), a "revitalization movement" passes through five stages in its quest "to create a more satisfying culture" and to transcend a cultural crisis. In the mid-1980s, American journalism has reached the second stage of the revitalization process, a period of "cultural distortion" in which normative standards crumble, disillusionment ensues and problems are perceived to be systemic institutional dysfunctions. Revitalization movements emerge to project a new cultural Gestalt organized around a symbol system that suggests fundamental institutional redefinition and change. Those incipient efforts are designed to construct a more statisfying culture.

The "crisis" in American journalism is most apparent in the fragmentation and absence of consensus regarding the ethical principles of the profession's traditional ideology (Korn, 1984). The ideological infrastructure of professional journalism has collapsed. The normative professional standard of objectivity has been called "obsolete" (Carey, 1969; McDonald, 1971; Smith, 1980), even pronounced "dead" (Christians, 1977). Post-World War II social responsibility theory has been declared "stillborn" (Christians, 1977), while journalists continue their "groping for ethics" (Goodwin, 1983) in an uncertain world.

No new conceptualization of media ethics has appeared to overcome the uncertainties facing journalists, although the telltale signs of revitalization are beginning to emerge. To illustrate, Schudson (1978) concluded his social history of newspapers with this telling comment on objectivity:

> There is no new ideal in journalism to successfully challenge objectivity, but there is a hope for something new, a simmering disaffection with objective reporting. There has been no magical leap beyond... (p. 193).

The only solution he could then offer was "personal and institutional tolerance of uncertainty and acceptance of risk and commitment to caring for truth" (p. 194). Six years later, Schudson (1984) offered a more startling solution: "a kind of schizophrenia on the part of the news media--to act as if classical democracy were possible, and simultaneously to work as if a large, informed and involved electorate were not possible" (p. 30).[1] Journalists are not likely to take much comfort in the projection of a professional role that defines normality as a mental pathology. Yet, such an equation suggests the profound crisis confronting journalism and American culture.

Mass media mirror the larger crisis of American culture, and they contribute to it. "In an exact sense, the present crisis of western democracy is a crisis in journalism," Lippmann (1920) reminded us long ago. In 1981, a 45-member commission, appointed in 1979 by President Jimmy Carter to develop "a national agenda for the eighties," reported substantial evidence for an American cultural crisis (Report, 1981). A "new constellation" of factors--domestic and international--had arisen since 1970 to radically alter the political, social, economic and value structure of the United States. The Commission found:

> --A "significant danger to our democracy" resulting from the "fragmentation" of clashing single-issue constituencies (pp. 11-12);[2]

--Growing racial/ethnic conflict, shifting demographic and geographic populations, and an unprecedented transformation in the size, composition and structure of the traditional family (pp. 17-23);

--High unemployment, inflation and stagnation in a U.S. economy experiencing unparalleled international competition, loss of innovation, declining productivity, and dislocations in the labor force (pp. 24-63); and,

--A national mood of "ambivalence, anxiety, and pessimism about the future" coupled with "pervasive discontent with the quality of life" that was prompting profound changes in attitudes, expectations and values (pp. 203-208).[3]

Paradoxically, America's major institutions, those most requiring revitalization, including the mass media, "will have vital roles to play in shaping such new attitudes and values" (p. 6). The President's Commission concluded: "We are experiencing an era of transition--a readjustment of our economic structure" (p. 6).

In capitalist societies, an era of transition produces revitalization movements in response to cultural uncertainty and disillusionment generated by dislocations in the economic structure. Revitalization of journalism's professional ideology reflects a cultural response to a "seismic shift of the economy" (Dizard, 1982, p. 3; Smith, 1980), prompting efforts to construct a new Gestalt appropriate to material changes in the environment.

Discourse over the ethical infrastructure of journalism's professional ideology, however, has been marred by an over-reliance

on a "mentalist" perspective--to the virtual exclusion of a "materialist" alternative. "Mentalists" believe in the "primacy of Mind," in "spinning ever more complex webs of signification through autonomous processes" to describe "the human relation with the material universe," according to Wolf (1982), while "materialists" see "proliferations of human consciousness as secondary," believing "human affairs are caused by the way human beings cope with nature" (p. 148).

In this essay, a materialist perspective anchors culture to its economic base to explore the historic development of the ethical infrastructure of journalism ideology in America. The revitalization of journalism ideology in the post-1970s is brought into sharper focus within the analytic framework of "long waves," a capitalist dynamic that suggests cyclical emergence of revitalization movements in journalism during the last 150 years. In addition, the essay expands previous efforts to develop a theoretical history of mass media within the synthetic perspective of "dialectic ecology" (Kaul, 1982; Kaul and McKerns, 1983, 1985; McKerns, 1985). Those efforts to probe "crises" in the life-cycle of the newspaper industry were limited to an institutional level of analysis. This essay builds upon earlier attempts (Kaul, 1984a, 1984b) to extend the institutional analysis into the cultural sphere of journalism ideology.

LONG WAVES AND THE CRISIS OF AMERICAN JOURNALISM

American capitalism has generated cyclical "long waves" of qualitative structural change in the economy of journalism,

prompting economic reconstruction and ideological revitalization in response to life-threatening crises.

LONG WAVES OF AMERICAN CAPITALISM. The existence of "long waves" in American history has been recognized by "mainstream" (Kuznets, 1930, 1961, 1965; Rostow, 1978; Schumpeter, 1939) and "radical" (Gordon, 1980; Gordon, Edwards and Reich, 1982; Mandel, 1968, 1978a, 1979b, 1980; Tylecote, 1984; Wallerstein, 1984) economists and historians. Within those divergent perspectives, capitalist economies are portrayed as cyclical structures prone to short- and long-term fluctuations of expansion and contraction with periodical ruptures into "crises," "panics," "recessions," and "depressions" (Rezneck, 1968).

By definition, a "long wave" is a 40-to-60 year cycle comprised of alternating periods (roughly 25 years) of vigorous growth and expansion followed by sustained stagnation and contraction. (See Table 1). Financial panics and depressions are

TABLE 1. Long Waves in American History: Expansions/Contractions

Long Wave	Expansion/ Contraction	Time Period	"Crisis"
I	Expansion	1780s--mid 1820s	1819-22
	Contraction	1820s--mid-1840s	1837-43
II	Expansion	mid 1840s--1873	1873-78
	Contraction	1873--late 1890s	1882-86
			1893-97
III	Expansion	1890s--1920	
	Contraction	1920--1945	1929-45
IV	Expansion	1945--1970s	
	Contraction	1970s--present	1973-74

SOURCES: Gordon, Edwards and Reich (1982, pp. 9, 12), Mandel (1978a, pp. 130-132) and Rezneck (1968, passim).

demarcation points for a long wave or phases within a long wave. The American economy has generated three long waves between the 1780s and World War II, with the "energy crisis" (1973-74) marking the onset of the contraction phase of the fourth long wave.

A set of interrelated factors creates a "causal texture" (Emery and Trist, 1965) that produces the conditions for expansion and contraction phases of long waves: technological innovation, population growth, consumption patterns and prices, among others. Their interactions with institutions, including mass media, establish an "ecology" for macrodynamic changes in the social structure of capitalist economy. With each long wave, a new institutional ecology emerges, requiring structural adaptations and generating "dialectic" contradictions. Adaptations (reconstructions) produce profitability in the expansion phase, while contradictions induce institutional failure (crises) in the contraction phase. The success-brings-failure syndrome endemic to capitalist economies suggests that long waves represent "a dialectic of defeat" (Schneider, 1971).

In terms of "dialectic ecology" (Kaul and McKerns, 1985), mass media evolve in stages of variation, selection and retention, punctuated by contradiction-generated institutional crises. Variation refers to the creation of new organizations or the radical modification of existing structures. Selection refers to processes in which newly-created or modified organizational forms are selected based on their fit with the environment. According to Aldrich (1979), "Organizations fitting environmental criteria are positively selected and survive, while others either fail or change to

match environmental requirements" (p. 29). Retention processes preserve, duplicate or reproduce selected behaviors and structures that tend to assure survival; retention also is a stage of conservative orthodoxy that prevents changes in the structure and ideology of organizations. Eventually, retention processes produce "innovation-resisting organizations" (Shepard, 1967), generating contradictions that imperil institutional survival.

Mass media are deeply enmeshed in the crisis/reconstruction dialectic of long waves. The institutional life cycle of the newspaper parallels the historic trajectory of long waves. (See Table 2) The dialectic ecology and long waves perspectives

TABLE 2. Dialectic Ecology: Variation, Selection and Retention

Stage	Long Wave	Crisis	Reconstruction
Variation: 1825-1845	I/Contraction: 1825-1845	Neo-Media Competition: 1825-1845	
Selection: 1845-1900	II/Expansion: 1845-1873		Commercial "Independence": 1845-1875
	II/Contraction: 1873-1900	Intra-Medium Competition: 1875-1900	
Retention: 1900-	III/Expansion: 1900-1920		Professional "Objectivity": 1900-1925
	III/Contraction: 1920-1945	Inter-Media Competition: 1925-1945	
	IV/Expansion: 1945-1970s		"Social Responsibility": 1947-
	IV/Contraction: 1970s-	Neo-Media Competition: 1970s-	

SOURCES: Gordon, Edwards and Reich (1982, pp. 9, 12) and Kaul and McKerns (1983, 1985), with some revisions in the dating of the original dialectic ecology schema to take long waves into account. For the pre-1825 period, see Taylor (1964).

reveal several patterns in American media history:

--New media emerge in the contraction phase of long waves (the penny papers, 1830s-40s; radio-tv, 1920s-30s; computer-video, 1970s-80s);

--Crises generated by competition--from new media, within a medium, or among media--emerge in the contraction phase of long waves, prompting radical dislocations in the institutional ecology; and,

--Reconstruction occurs in the two domains--base and superstructure--of economics and ideology during the expansion phase of long waves in an attempt to realign institutions within the new ecology.

To illustrate: the penny papers of the variation stage were a new medium that radically shifted the economic infrastructure of newspapers from political patronage to marketplace competition (Schiller, 1981; Schudson, 1978). In the selection stage, marketplace competition among newspapers became increasingly risky, reducing their profitability, pushing many of them to a breaking point, and threatening their survival. The newspaper industry of the retention stage responded to the crisis by withdrawing from direct competition; mergers reduced competition, created newspaper monopolies and restored stability to a radically altered marketplace (Braverman, 1974; Edwards, 1979).

The two major shifts in the economic infrastructure of journalism--partisan to commercial, competition to monopoly--provided the impetus for a corollary shift in ideology. The commercial press asserted its moral superiority by claiming to be "independent" of self-serving political interests, an

ideological maneuver in response to economic- and class-generated "moral wars" of the 1830s and 1840s (Schudson, 1978, pp. 56-57). To be politically "independent," however, did not remove the press from vulnerability to competing economic claims of newspapers, advertisers and audiences. The commercial captivity of the press, its self-absorption in the profit imperative, produced a formidable turn-of-the-century public backlash that further threatened newspapers' marketplace existence (Birkhead, 1984). To counteract a critical public insurgency, the press' anti-competitive commercial strategy was deployed into the ideological sphere (Dimmick, 1977; Schultz, 1981). Like its withdrawal from economic competition, the press asserted that with "objectivity" the news had been withdrawn from all competing claims of special interests--economic, moral, political, and social. The "impartiality," "neutrality," "objectivity," and "public service" ethos of professional "ethics" projected an image of press performance that ostensibly transcended its own commercial imperatives.

Journalism responded to economic "crises" and "depressions" generated in the long waves of American capitalism by harnessing morality to marketing mechanisms. The ideological resolution of economic "crises" reflects "a deep rooted American tradition and tendency to resolve problems and issues of depression into moral terms" (Rezneck, 1968, p. 191). The long wave and dialectic ecology perspectives provide an analytic framework for understanding the crises of American journalism in the Twentieth Century, including the post-1970s. In the next section, long waves are

situated within the variation-selection-retention schema to suggest linkages of economics and ideology in historic patterns of crisis in American journalism.

CRISIS IN AMERICAN JOURNALISM. American journalism has experienced three types of competitive economic crisis in the last century-and-a-half: neo-media, intra-medium, and inter-media. Competitive crises erupted in the contraction phase of long waves, prompting reconstruction in the expansion phase of the succeeding long wave.

Variation: Neo-Media Competition. The Depression of 1819-22 began a long wave of economic contraction that culminated in the Panic of 1837 and the ensuing Depression of 1837-43. Prices collapsed, profits fell, businesses went bankrupt, factories closed, unemployment increased and social conflict rose--all in massive proportions. "What is to become of the laboring classes," asked New York Mayor Philip Hone in 1837. Workingmen reacted militantly to the "degradation of labor" they had experienced for more than a decade. Between 1833 and 1837, union membership increased from 26,250 to 300,000 and 168 strikes had been called (Foner, 1947, p. 108), a variety of workingmen's political parties sprang into existence (Pessen, 1956), spawning at least 50 labor newspapers in the 1820s and 1830s (Brooks, 1971).

Commercial journalism was born during the protracted economic crisis between 1825 and 1845. The penny papers of Benjamin Day (1833), James Gordon Bennett (1835), and Horace Greeley (1841) coopted a significant portion of the labor press audience with an ideology directed against the mercantile establishment (Schiller,

1981, pp. 43-46). The explosive growth in the numbers and the circulations of the penny papers consolidated the marketplace position of commercial journalism, at first displacing, then eliminating the mercantile press. The new medium of the penny papers radically altered the competitive structure of public communication. With its ideology of reason, equality and public good, commercial journalism colonized its new "market" during the expansion phase of the next long wave.

Selection: Intra-Medium Competition. American economic expansion between 1845 and 1875 was parallel to growth in the size, complexity and capital-intensity of commercial newspapers. "But is not this new mode after all the style of our journalism of to-day? Is it not all on a grand scale?," Hudson (1873, p. 737) exclaimed at the height of the expansion phase. The Depression of 1873-78 triggered a 25-year stagnation cycle for the national economy and for the newspaper industry.

Growth in the number of dailies--65 in 1830, 2,226 in 1900 (1,967 English-language)--far outpaced population growth, generating a dense competitive ecology among newspapers. In New York City, 18 dailies competed in 1840, 29 in 1899; Boston, Philadelphia, Cleveland, Chicago and San Francisco had a total of 82 dailies in 1880, 137 in 1899 (Kaul and McKerns, 1985). With markets saturated, intra-medium competition for limited resources (advertising and circulation) intensified, constrained profits, and threatened newspapers' survival. Intra-medium competition reached its apex in the 1890s when Yellow Journalism emerged during the Depression of 1893-97, prompting a critical public

backlash that undermined the commercial press' claim to public service (Birkhead, 1984).

After the financial crisis of the mid-1880s, class conflicts accelerated, with strike activity reaching a crescendo that extended beyond the Depression of 1893-97. The frequency of strikes and the percentage of establishments involved in them doubled between 1893-94 and 1903-04 when 6.8% of the nation's workers were involved in strike actions (Gordon, et. al., 1982, pp. 98, 123-124; Montgomery, 1976; also see, Coombs, 1984). The 1894 Pullman strike added solidarity to the workers' movement against "the Money-Power" and its reliance on "newspaper invective" for legitimation. "What a scurrying of these chaps there will be after a while, when labor gets on top," journalist-turned-labor activist John Swinton (1894) prophesied. "The venal editors will devote whole pages of big type everyday to the noble cause of the consecrated workingman" (pp. 252-255).[4]

Publishers were not oblivious to the plight of the working class. Their own backshops and newsrooms were factory sweatshops ripe for outbursts of labor militancy, unionization and strikes (Smythe, 1980).[5] Theodore Dreiser's first-hand experience of the "sharp contrast between the professed ideals and preachments" of Joseph Pulitzer's New York World and the "heartless and savage aspect of its internal economy" (quoted in Smythe, 1980, p. 8) expressed the dissonance of many reporters in the 1890s. To protect itself against vulnerability to labor radicalism and profit-threatening strikes, the commercial press proffered professionalism to accommodate journalists moral and status ambitions while

subverting their economic claims. "We need a class feeling among journalists--one based not upon money, but upon morals, education and character," Pulitzer (1904) wrote in the midst of militant labor agitation. According to Stark (1980), "The risk of strikes and other forms of industrial disruption entered into the calculations of every capitalist who contemplated reorganizing work and supervision" (p. 103).

Like other American industries (Kolko, 1967; Wieber, 1967), the commercial press reorganized during the expansion phase of a new long wave. Between 1900 and 1925, the press withdrew from intra-medium competition through mergers and consolidations, moves calculated to achieve long range market stability (Kaul and McKerns, 1985; McKerns, 1985). Professional "objectivity" emerged as an ideological corollary to commercial noncompetition --the withdrawal of news from competing claims. Professionalism ideologically reorganized journalism, substituting moral achievement for financial aggrandizement, mental for manual labor. The new professional "class feeling" dissociated journalists from the working class, integrated (and coopted) them into bourgeoise capitalism, and insulated publishers' commercial interests against profit-threatening strikes. Professionalism was a commercial strategy ratified in the ideological language of public morality.

Retention: Inter-Media Competition. With merger, consolidation and professionalization continuing in the post-World War I contraction phase, the emergence of radio in the 1920s pushed the commercial press into a protracted inter-media competitive

crisis during the Great Depression. Radio radically altered the economic base of the commercial press, siphoning away massive amounts of advertising revenue. Although total U.S. expenditures for national advertising in relation to national income declined slowly in the 1920s, the pace accelerated in the 1930s (Cochran, 1975). Between 1929 and 1945, newspapers lost a substantial share of advertising to radio. (See Table 3)

TABLE 3. Advertising Expenditures During Inter-Media Competition

Medium	National Advertising Expenditures 1929 (1939)	Total Advertising Expenditures 1935 (1945)
Newspapers	54% (38%)	45.2% (32%)
Magazines	42% (35%)	8.3% (12.5%)
Radio	4% (27%)	6.5% (14.6%)

SOURCE: McKerns (1985).

Intermedia competition between newspapers and radio spawned a variety of competitive strategies to restore stability to the media marketplace. The American Newspaper Publishers Association in 1932 recommended that wire services refuse to make news available to radio before its newspaper publication, a retaliatory move that backfired by opening the wire service field to new entrants. Associated Press members vetoed membership applications from radio competitors, a practice declared an illegal restraint of trade by the Supreme Court in 1945 (McKerns, 1985). Another strategic response to the "menace of radio" was newspapers' absorption of its broadcast competition. The pace of acquisition

quickened between 1936 and 1949. Newspapers owned 26% (168) of all radio stations in 1936, 28% (249) in 1941, and 24% (476) in 1949, including 39% (281) of the nation's FM stations (Emery, 1950, pp. 208-210). The commercial press' strategic reaction to inter-media competition followed the pattern of its response to intra-medium competition: stabilization through marketplace consolidation and merger.

In the ideological sphere, interpretative reporting arose in the 1930s as a competitive marketplace strategy later ratified into a moral imperative. Interpretative reporting's emphasis on analysis and commentary represented a form of "product differentiation"--an attempt to distinguish the news commodities of newspapers from radio (McKerns 1985). Moreover, interpretative reporting was the special domain of upper echelon professional journalists. News commentary offered status achievement to upwardly mobile professional journalists, further separating them from the "working class" reporters of the American Newspaper Guild (1933), which had disrupted newspaper operations with costly contract negotiations and strikes (Emery and Emery, 1984, pp. 692-695).[6] Like objectivity's ratification in the American Society of Newspaper Editor's Canons of Journalism (1923), interpretative reporting was a commercial strategy translated into the moral ideology of "social responsibility" by the Commission on Freedom of the Press (1947).[7]

The crisis of inter-media competition that emerged during the contraction phase between World Wars I and II was stabilized into a new ecology during the 25-year expansion phase that ended

in the early 1970s. Between 1945 and 1970, reduced competitive struggle was achieved through continued intra-medium and inter-media consolidation, while the commercial strategies of objectivity and interpretative reporting merged into the ideology of professional morality.

The post-1970 crisis in the economic structure of American journalism ruptured into the cultural domain of professional ideology and morality. The cultural crisis was generated by a combination of neo- and inter-media competitive crises during the contraction phase of the post-World War II long wave. The specialization of existing media and the emergence of new media led to newspaper "failures" and a "residual role" for the "survivors" in the new communication ecology of the 1970s and 1980s (Rosse, 1980).[8] Shrinkage in the size of mass media relative to the total economy has imperiled their "mass" existence (Maisel, 1973). The dissolution and fragmentation of the mass media's economic infrastructure was reproduced in a "differentiated culture" which has withdrawn "economic and moral support" from traditional institutions (p. 179). The legitimation crisis of American culture expresses itself in the collapse of consensus about journalism's social ethics and in the renewed quest to revitalize the ideological imperatives of a crisis-ridden professional culture.

The American tendency to translate economic crises into moral terms, commercial strategies into professional ideologies, mystifies the linkage of culture to economics. The long waves of American capitalism reveal a pattern in which resolution to

economic crisis sets the agenda for ideological reconstruction. In the mid-1980s, American journalism is moving through a transition stage to a new economic and cultural ecology. Discourse over media morality signals a process of revitalization in which efforts are made to project and select a new cultural Gestalt to bring morality into alignment with the economic infrastructure. If the historic pattern of long waves holds, a resolution to the contemporary crisis will not emerge for another decade or so, and then economic reconstruction will once again express itself in a new language for professional ideology and public morality.

NOTES

[1] Such a contradictory stance, stemming from the "crisis of legitimacy" experienced by the news media, displays among spokespersons of the critical perspective "a dangerously unresolved attitude toward liberalism, which historically has supplied most of the philosophic pillars of democracy" (Blumler, 1983, p. 169).

[2] Another indication of an American cultural crisis is expressed in the Commission's analytic attachment to the neo-Progressive, Cold War era ideology of consensus and its rejection of systemic conflict as endemic to American society. The ideology of consensus focuses attention on conflict resolution, with the emphasis on resolution. (See Horowitz, 1962; Horton, 1966)

[3] The Commission's capitalist ideological stance sees no connection between the economic system and attitudes and values. The "satisfaction" of needs for "growth, personal fulfillment, self-esteem, and happiness," the Commission noted, "is a subjective matter that bears no direct relation to economic resources" (p. 204). With that assertion, among others, the Commission actually diverts attention away from the powerful linkage between economics (base) and culture (superstructure), thereby limiting the options for change to noneconomic domains. In fact, the Commission sees the need for major institutional changes in almost every sphere, but explicitly rejects the idea that American capitalism requires systemic restructuring: "In our view, the slowdown of the past decade is not the result of a systemic illness" (p. 25). American capitalism may need a tune-up ("readjustment"), the Commission argued, but not an overhaul. In other words, 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it.'

[4] The prophetic rhetoric of the labor movement in the 1890s deployed language strategies that depicted boycotts and strikes as "an open confrontation between...working-class virtue and a social order which sanctified selfishness" (Montgomery, 1976, p. 502).

[5] The International Typographical Union had amended its constitution by 1891 to authorize the issuance of charters to reporters and editors, and "a wave of twenty-one short-lived locals broke and spent itself between 1899 and 1904" (Schiller, 1981, p. 184). Two "distinct crests in the groundswell of sympathetic strikes" appear between 1886 and 1888 and between 1890-92 (Montgomery, 1976, p. 501). The American Newspaper Publishers Association engaged in active strikebreaking activities during the first three decades of the Twentieth Century (Emery, 1950).

[6] The Guild was involved in 20 strikes between 1933 and 1938, joined the CIO in 1937 and included office employees (Emery and Emery, 1984, p. 694).

[7] The Commission codified interpretative reporting into the social responsibility ethic by insisting that the press has an obligation to provide "a truthful, comprehensive, and intelligent account of the day's events in a context which gives them meaning," "a forum for the exchange of comment and criticism," and "clarification of the goals and values of the society" (pp. 20-29, emphasis added).

[8] "Newspapers that are second in their markets to strong leading dailies and evening newspapers likely will continue to fail," according to J. Kendrick Noble Jr., first vice president of Paine Webber Inc., New York. The number of dailies is expected to decrease by 74 between 1985 and 1990, from 1,691 (1985) to 1,617 (1990), his analysis shows (Noble Jr., 1985, p. 38).

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